1.95 LIILa

THE LABOR PROBLEM ON DAIRY FAILES

IN

SEVERAL NORTHEASTERN AND NORTHGENTRAL STATES
DURING THE 1922 AGRICULTURAL SEASON

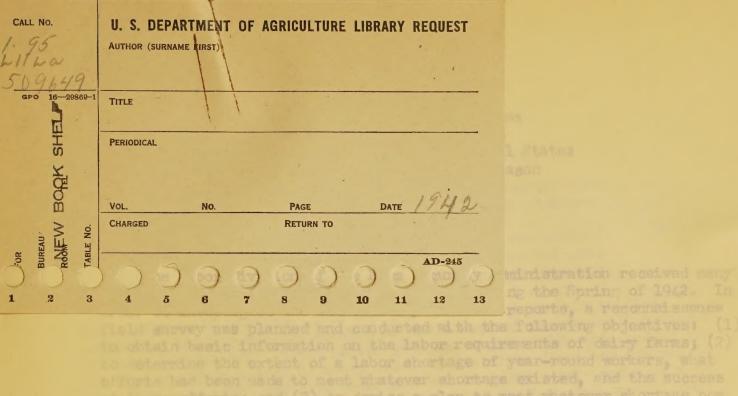
Prepared by

Labor Division
Farm Security Administration
United States Department of Agriculture

Washington, D. C.

July 1942

OCT 4 1944



509649

Feveral Northeastern and Northgentral States During the 1942 Agricultural Season

Introduction

The Labor Division of the Farm Security Administration received many reports of a labor shortage on dairy farms during the Spring of 1942. In prior to investigate the authenticity of these reports, a reconsissance field survey was planned and conducted with the following objectives: (1) to obtain basic information on the labor requirements of dairy farms; (2) to determine the extent of a labor shortage of year-round workers, what apports has been made to meet whatever shortage existed, and the success of these efforts; and (3) to devise a plan to meet whatever shortage now allows or may exist in the near future.

The following counties were visited by members of the Labor Division tieff: Litchfield, Connecticut; Chittenden, Vermont; Madison and St. Lavrence, New York; Carroll, Indiana; Fent, Ingham, Livingston and Lavrence, Michigan; Cane, Illinois; Tame, Codge, Marathon, and Cankesha, Tsevening Copoline, Pinnesota; and Jackson, Missouri.

Findings and Conclusions

in of July 1, 1942, no neute shortage of year-round help on drivy to me was found in any of the areas that were visited. Finny shortages are found in the countles that were close to defense production comers. In other places, particularly in Minnesota, the labor supply was safficient to meet needs.

The findings, supporting the conclusion that there is no acute

- duction during the first five months of 1942 over the same period in 1941. This increase is especially mignificent them it is noted that 1941 was a year of relatively high production.
- 2. There has been little or no loss of feed crops, such as hay and corn, that can be attributed weinly to a lack of regular hired help.
- 3. Replacements have been found for many of the farm hands who have left during the last year or two.
- Local draft boards have deterred a high percentage of regular year-round farm sorkers who were needed on the form on which employed and who requested such action.

-24

- heeded to get essential work done.
- ing, for example, the cooperative use of machinery and the exchange of labor, have not been fully tarped.

Courties visited in Connecticut, New York, southern Wisconsin, and southern Michigan are located close to defense centers and, as a result of farmers and local officials in these areas is that a shortage exists. In some cases, their opinions are bolstered with the facts of a State or local survey that indicate a reduction up to 30 per cent in the normal supply of regular farm labor. A few stories of operators who have been belo, are current in these counties.

That these areas were experiencing at least a minor degree of labor shortage was indicated by the following evidence:

- l. Wages by the month with board for experienced farm workers, have increased from between \$30 and \$45 of two years ago to between \$60 and \$60 at the present time. Some cases were found in which a married man was being paid over \$100 a month besides being given a house, milk, wood, and other perquisites.
- Although the flow of farm hands to defense industries has sladeened during the last six months (January through June), it is still heavy.
- Family members are being used to get through peak work periods that were formerly met by hiring extra labor.
- An The farm operator is often working longer hours than he has been accustomed to and the maximum that he thinks him health will stand.
- have been lowered during the past two years. Some farmers are using or are willing to use inexperienced workers.
- oric, delayed essential work, or reduced the acreage in
- Local Employment Service offices have orders for regular and for seasonal farm help that they cannot fill.

Labor Requirements on Dairy Parms

In attempting adjustments to present conditions of the farm labor and the planning for the years shead when farm labor shortsees may to intensified, it is necessary to know the number and degree of skill of year-round workers needed on dedry farms.

Assuring that the operator is able to do a full day's work, that he tax the use of milking machines, that he is without family assistance.
That he does not grow cash crops or have other subsidiary enterprises that require labor, and that he grows only the amount of feed needed for his commutack, the need for hired year-round men appears to be as follows:

- 1. Mono is needed in milking up to 20 or 25 come. The operator, however, would need a summer field hand when milking over 15 come.
- The operator and one hired year-round man could milk from 40 to 45 cows and take care of all the field work, providing they had the use of modern equipment and had fairly good weather during the summer.
- 3. The operator and two year-round men could wilk up to 80 or 90 coms and take care of almost all of the field work. When more than 70 or 75 coms were being milked, the three men would probably need help during having and silo-filling time.

Tany farms are not organized as "economic" units from the standpoint of labor use. For instance, assuming conditions mentioned shows, a farmer with a herd of 25 cass and one full-time hired man would not be making full use of his manpower.

the skill of the men employed on a drivy farm is cormonly taken to be one of high degree. A breakdown of the work by jobs to be done, however, reveals the fact that ruch of the work could be accomplished by persons who were inexperienced or who had been given no more than a month's training.

The barn tork would include milking, feeding, caring for ill and injured rattle, breeding, calving, drawing hay, disposing of manure, and cleaning stalls and utenails. The field work would include ploughing, harrowing, planting, cultivating, haying and other hervesting, driving tractors, becausing and leading horses, making repairs on machinery, and feeding and otherwise caring for work animals.

The caring for ill and injured cattle and the making of repairs on and injured planting, planting, handling of horses, and some of the harvesting operations are semi-skilled. The other work takes whinly strong muscles and some sense of responsibility.

of the farmer's time would be freed to enable him to take care of the highly skilled work and to supervise inexperienced assistants in doing want class had to be done. Although some efficiency might be lost, the work would be completed well enough to make the farm profitable and to pull the operator through a period of labor stringency.

Plan to Alleviate Shortage

Although no emergency existed in the states visited at the time of the study and no entrees haste is necessary to meet the needs of the rost of the 1942 season, now is the time to start planning for the anticipated labor shortage of next spring and summer. The need for planning is especially great in view of the fact that once there is a general sale of milk cows for beef, it takes a long time to bild up again to a normal output of milk.

A suggested program of action to meet labor shortages that might arise next year is outlined below. This program provides for both summaried hands and for year-round help, because in some cases a shortage of regular help might be not by hiring workers only for the peak particle and by introducing labor saving neasures for the winter months.

- There should be continued use of students, women, Regreta, conscientious objectors, business men, merchents and clerke in towns and in villages, and other persons not usually recruited of engaged in work on dairy farms. Better scirchical should be shown in the recruitment and placement of students than has been taken so far in some of the States that were visited.
- Local groups of farm operators, farm heads, and other workers who could spare some time during the week from their own jobs should be organized and provided at a machinery to nest emergency needs as they arise on individual farms in the community.
- Je Training programs for regular farm hands at State Universities and other centers should be increased in number and unpanded in scope. Greater appeals than those asde so far might have to be made in the future to recruit men and women for these courses.
- An Parmers should be further advised and encouraged to exchange labor and machinery to a greater extent than they

- The Department of Agriculture and State Agricultural Colleges, with the assistance of labor management specialists, should undertake to help farmers improve the efficiency with which they use Isbor. A series of local demonstrations should be held to illustrate good labor management practices leading to fuller utilization of available labor.
- If local farm labor supply is demonstrated to be inadequate to meet the needs of a county or State, outside workers should be moved into the area. CCC camps, tourist places, unused school buildings, and other available housing should be utilized and properly supervised. Prefabricated homes, temporary housing, and improvements to existing housing should be provided in those areas in which a substantial number of married farm hands would be available if such measures were taken.

Necessary transportation for the movement of individuals or crews from the central housing unit to the farms could be obtained by the use of school buses and other vehicles that could be spared for the purpose.

- 7. Records should be kept in each county on the sale of milk come for beef and the causes responsible for such disposals. It would then be known whether labor or other difficulties were adversely affecting necessary milk production.
- R. When the records on the sale of milk cows showed a grave danger that milk production of the area would be greatly lowered if allowed to continue, farmers should be strongly discouraged from selling such animals for beef. These owners could be given two alternatives. First, to rent their cows to small farmers who had the extra labor and barn space to care for more stock, but who were unable to purchase them. Second, to lesse their farms to persons who were located on submarginal places and who were willing to move to the more productive farms as tenants.
- 9. When the labor shortege developed to the point that drastic action was necessary to prevent a large decrease in milk production, a Federal seemy should be empowered to regulate the movement of farm hands to other jobs.

Control of labor mobility, however, should be accomplished by proper safeguards of the workers' legitimate interests. One of these safeguards would exist if the workers were given a representative of their own choosing to sit as a member of the control agency. Another safeguard would prevail if the agency were given the power to adjust wages and other working conditions to standards acceptable to the workers and within the competency of farm employers to meet.

10. If the measures described above prove inadequate to give farmers the labor necessary to produce the minimum emount of milk needed by the nation, then drafting into the armed forces of persons employed on farms should be more drastically curtailed.

The Conduct of the Regonnaissance Survey

Only counties of specialized dairy farming were selected in New York, Vermont, and Connecticut. In the other States, both counties of mixed more specialized dairy farming were chosen. The conclusions presented in this summary are based mainly on the findings for dairy farms as such.

Tithin each county, from 10 to 35 farmers were interviewed for information on their use of labor and on problems connected with it. These farmers were selected usually by random methods. The great majority of farms visited were found milking between 12 and 50 caws. The number of year-round help found on these farms varied from none to two in about of per cent of the cases.

Extension Service, Farm Security Administration and Farm Placement officials were interviewed in all States and counties. Along with them were seen Selective Service officials, University professors, State agricultural statisticians, USDA Tar Board chalaven, RAE field representatives and others. Altogether, from 150 to 200 of these officials were contacted.

Interviews with farmers were conducted in an informal menner. They were questioned out in the field in the midst of their work, in their barns, at their home, or wherever also found. They were seted from 10 to 15 questions in a conversational way.

Officials were interviewed with more direct methods. The purpose of the survey was emploised to them and their cooperation recurated. Their ensures to questions were often recorded openly. Counter opinions were offered for discussion. Almost always, these officials recognized the labor problem as one of great importance in their locality, save much of their time to the interviewer and often prepared the contacts that were made with farmers.

ty of the subject of the property we have detailed by the contract of the subject of the subject

1 to a I can II tosa siden to de production de la little de la little

les Vistoed. Table III gives 1940 tensus liberes of the rate of the rate of the rate of family solvers and notices bised by the note. If has IV at may the notice of building addition to the farm or arrow user on To the larges whalled in the present eracy, he side of bord. It is not the stabler to any, thore was a nottine half for the present of the farm of the far







| | 8 | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------------------------|----------|--------|--|--|--|--|
| . 6 | | | | | | | | |
| To Provide the Continuous and a second | a recommend | months in the will and the manuscripe | 2 | 10/2 | | | | |
| e 2 7 2 | å | # 1 g2 | 1 24.7 | 16.0 | | | | |
| a. A | * | 1:00 | | 17.3 | | | | |
| | \$ 0 | 2 0 | 1 1.7 | 20.4 | | | | |
| | 6 | | 2 | | | | | |
| | 00 | 11.0 | 1 10.0 | 13.1 | | | | |
| | 8 | 3. 2. | : 160h : | 27.2 | | | | |
| | 8 | 2:02 | 1 27.0 : | 1.7.2. | | | | |
| | 9 | 1 .6 | 1 1.0 2 | 19.9 | | | | |
| | 6 | 17.00 | 20,0 | 21.60 | | | | |
| | 8 | 1 02 | . 10.1 | 16.0 | | | | |
| | 8 | | 2 | | | | | |
| | 8 | | | | | | | |
| to en where the property of | 1 | | 2 | | | | | |

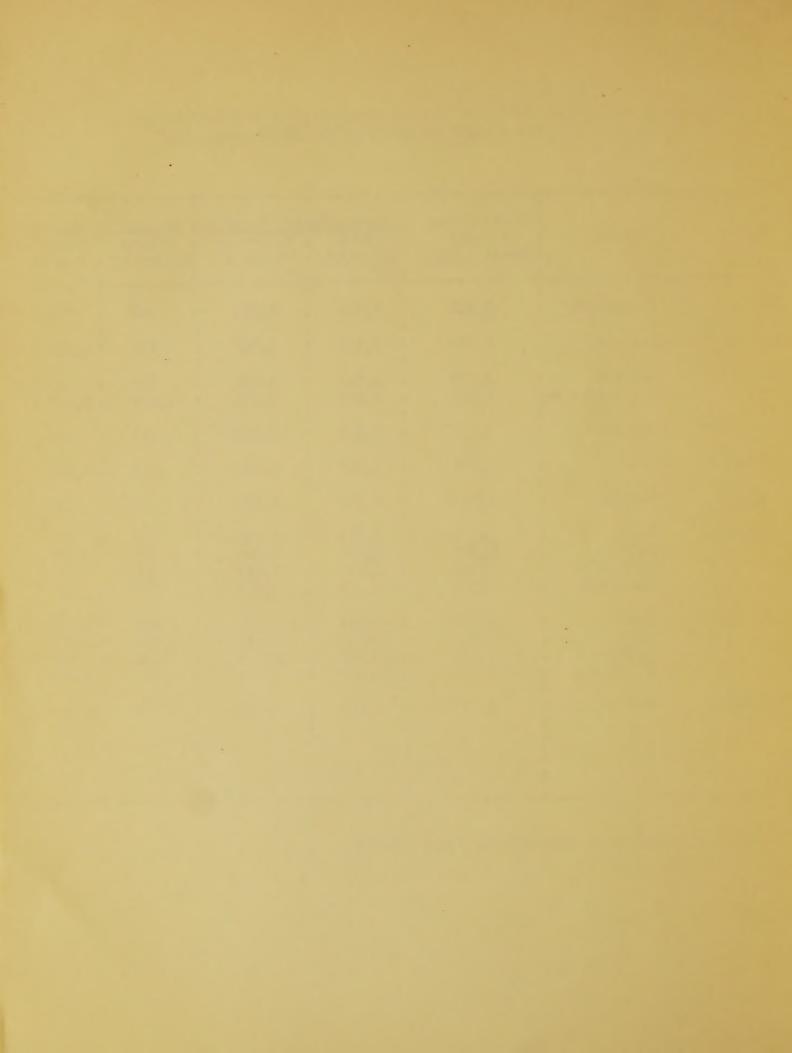
^{. 1 (-}perel from terest as of its wet 1, 1922, Buseau of forder -



BY THE MONTH IN 16 COUNTIES, MARCH 24-30, 1940

| | | Dopaid Family Workers Farms : Number of Reporting : Workers | | Farms : Mumber of Reporting : Workers | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 1,642 | 1 2,275 | 2,033 | 1 497 | 760 |
| | 2,795 | 1 1 2,156 | 3,080 | x x 754. | 1 1,298 |
| | 2,752 6,236 | t 2,045 t 5,053 | 3,091 | 1 695 1 1,278 | 1 929 1 1,600 |
| Jackson | 3,868 | 8 3,298 | 4,553 | 452 | 858 |
| | 2,071 | : 1,819 | 3,139 | : 833 | 1,225 |
| Carroll | 1,742 | 1,497 | 2,075 | 1 154 | 185 |
| Tent Incham Livingston Vashtensw | 5,623 2,999 2,236 3,363 | : 2,496 : 1,894 | 6,088 3,225 2,642 4,025 | \$ 534 \$ 332 \$ 361 \$ 508 | 622 457 455 690 |
| Tane 1 Dodge 1 Varathon 1 Vaukema 1 | 5,835 4,564 6,564 3,367 | 3,903 5,594 | 7,575 6,413 11,274 3,993 | 1 1,300 | 1,590 1,581 1,563 |
| Goodhua | 3,037 | 2,615 | | 1 767 | |
| | | | | ; ; ; | |

Stores: 1940 Consus of Agriculture, Second Series.



TARM OPERATOR ON 73 DAIRY FARM WORKERS—IN ADDITION TO
PARM OPERATOR ON 73 DAIRY FARMS CLASSIFIED BY
NUMBER OF COVS MILKED 2

| | | Number of farms having the following number of year-round adult workers in addition to the farm operator | | | | | |
|---------|----|--|------|-----|----------|-----------|--|
| | | None | 1 | 1 5 | 1 3 or 4 | 5 or more | |
| | | | | 1 0 | | \$ \$ | |
| | 31 | i i | 1 16 | : 3 | 1 1 | 3 0 | |
| | | | | | | : 0 | |
| | | 1 | | : 4 | 1 1 | | |
| K5 - 76 | 5 | | | | 3 | 1 | |
| | | | | | 1 2 | 1 3 | |
| | | | | 10 | | | |

Apprenents hired and unpaid family labor. On the smaller farms, a considerable number of farmers were aided by their wives and children.

The farms listed are in the following counties: Litchfield, Connecticut; Chittenden, Vermont; Madison and St. Lawrence, New York; Kent, Livingston and Fashter w., Kichigan; Dane, Dodge, Marathon and Waukesha, Wisconsin; and Jackson, Wisconsin; and

